

**Illinois Early Learning Council**  
**Family and Community Engagement**  
**Principles & Practices Subcommittee**

**May 14, 2015 • 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

**Minutes**

- **Attendees:** Granada Williams, Juliet Bromer, Nick Weschler, Toni Porter, Beth Lakier, and Letitia Parker
- **Minutes**
  - Reviewed and discussed minutes from last meeting on Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>
- **Work Plan Discussion**
  - Prioritized the objectives
    - Will focus first on Objective 4 – the crosswalk of FPTRQ measure and tool for the Awards of Excellence
    - Second priority is Objective 2 – assessing professional development for areas of family and community engagement. Subcommittee agreed that these made sense as the two priorities to focus on for the subcommittee.
- **Discussion of FPTRQ tool and cross-walk with PAS**
  - Juliet Bromer presented the cross-walk for the FPTRQ tool that is being recommended for the Awards of Excellence on Family and Community Engagement
    - Juliet shared that the FPTRQ tool was a 4-year project with the federal Office of Head Start
    - Few states have used this tool and Illinois may be one of these states; which is very cutting edge
    - The tool looks at and measures attitudes and behaviors of the provider with the parent and is meant to facilitate positive relationships. Our AoE work aligns well with the FPTRQ tool although we went a bit further.
    - This is very different from measuring or evaluating parent engagement. Parent engagement is an intermediate outcome and not what gets measured in this tool.
    - The belief is that strong relationships come first and then the engagement follows.
    - The tool can be found here: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/development-of-a-measure-of-family-and-provider-teacher-relationship-quality-fptrq>
  - For the Awards for Excellence on FCE, there will be 3 tools that can be used to assess against the standards: FPTRQ, PAS (Program Administration Scale), and portfolio documentation (these are the evidence statements that were a part of the standards)
    - PAS is at Level 7 because most of the ExceleRate standards require that programs to meet a Level 5. For Family & Community Engagement, in order for programs to get the AoE, they have to be at Level 7
  - FPTRQ outcomes are not yet validated. However, the tools and thresholds developed are still very strong and developed with research-based findings.
  - June 26 – OECD will bring Toni Porter formerly of Bank Street to talk about the tool and how the state can use the tool. The morning will be a public presentation open to general group of people. The afternoon will be a smaller subgroup for most of the TA and trainers.
    - Other people to invite: Other ELC committees like CSD or special needs, ISBE staff like Donna Emmons or Jenny Metcalf, PreK Expansion OECD staff like Bryan Stokes
      - We discussed a list of FAQs for Toni's presentation including:
        - How are programs expected to collect the data for this measure? What supports will they get to understand the meaning of the data they collect?

- What are the limitations of this tool? (Can we upfront that there are limitations but that there is still a value in the tool)
- Who will be expected to take the surveys for the tool? Who should fill them out?
- Should programs use all the measures in the tool or focus on just a few at a time?
- What is the ease of using this tool for practitioners?
- Share who has been a part of the field test and the range of programs as well as share that the tool was tested across various racial and ethnic communities.
- How does the tool account or measure the “interdisciplinary nature of the work” – meaning how does it look at how family service workers may work with teachers to help the families/child? While they have different “roles” they may work together?
- FPTRQ and PAS don’t cover two main areas of the AoE for FCE – which are transitions and community engagement. (Professional development and data gathering/usage are additional gaps) Where there is a gap, portfolio documentation will fill it. The AoE standards cover community engagement but the FPTRQ mainly covers accessing community resources and not so much involvement in the community.
- Juliet shared that FPTRQ has a specific tool for Head Start that is unique to Head Start. However the tool has been tested in all programs except those in school-based settings.

- **Discussion of focus group findings with AoE Standards**

- Juliet shared a document of best practices and needs for training and support (results from a series of focus groups of providers and parents) and cross-walked the findings with the AoE Standards
- Areas that emerged from the findings were that:
  - Teachers need resources and support to engage in family and community engagement such as better salaries, more time, and more support.
  - Teachers don’t always have the knowledge to engage adults. They are good at engaging children but not always the adults.
  - Need more professional development training for staff and teachers – Strengthening Families is a training that may help teachers improve engagement with families
  - There is a brief that looks at FPTRQ and connects it with Strengthening Families, Head Start’s Family and Community Engagement Standards and how the tools can work together and align
  - Question is: what is the impact of these trainings on children’s learning and growth? Child development?
  - How do we connect the relationships between home and school and school and home for the child and the family?
- Letitia shared some findings from her work with 22 programs:
  - She shared the need to identify the passion for families; they provide a training that has five components focused on “desire, connection, and passion.”
  - The second part is on personal development – such as the barriers to engaging families.
  - The third looks at their education and educational background.
  - Fourth looks at their professional development – what can they take ownership in learning and doing?
  - She shared they are doing workshops to engage with programs. She shared examples of how programs, even at the Gold level, don’t have core elements of the effective practices well. She shared an example of how one program has everything in Spanish but when they took a tour, it was clear there are other racial/ethnic groups served. The program didn’t see the need to translate in other languages because they said the parents didn’t want it.
  - We discussed the need to adapt to families as well as parents with their learning and experience.
- We discussed the need to consider approach – what is the best way to train teachers/staff? Is it on-line? Is it through individual coaching and TA?
  - We need to think not just of “content” but also look at “transformational learning” and the process of learning over time.

- **Professional Development Opportunities**

- We discussed looking at resources out there for professional development opportunities for programs.
- We talked about connecting to the family credential working group and making sure the work aligns.
- Our inventory of programs/trainings would look at type of training, audience, cost of training?
- We should consider evaluation – how do we know these trainings are working well?
- Nick shared that the Ounce can present on some of their trainings. Nick offered a framing for the conversation that looks at:
  - What is the availability?
  - What is the accessibility?
  - What is the acceptability?
- We talked about possibly convening people together who do trainings/support work to offer a symposium?
- We should consider cross-training across the system and not just those that work on family and community engagement?
- Can we have a more integrated approach to our training – such as teachers and dedicated staff.
- Through our work, the subcommittee's role will be to make the recommendation for change(s) that support and enhances Family and Community Engagement practices/policies.

- **Next Steps:**

- Granada will work with Toni to determine the research and resources the Family Credential work group used to develop the credential
- Choua will look for list of existing professional development trainings and resources originally developed by the group.
- Consider a date to meet in July as a subcommittee.
- Nick shared that there is a webinar on June 16-18<sup>th</sup> on data use.

- **Upcoming Meeting Dates**

- June 22<sup>nd</sup> – Full Early Learning council meeting
- June 26 – Presentation with Toni Porter
- Full FCE Committee... July 22<sup>nd</sup> (Tues, 11am-1pm)